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HOWIE HORWITZ

THE THIRTEENTH HAT

(Springboard)

The Mad Hatter slips into a fancy silver shop and steals the manager's hat. This is seen by a pretty sales girl, Lisa, who starts to scream. The Mad Hatter clamps his hand over her mouth, pulls a gun on her and carries her out -- along with the hat. Next, the Mad Hatter slips into the library of a wealthy sportsman and steals a hunting hat. This is seen by the sportsman's pretty secretary, Laura (same actress), who starts to scream. The Mad Hatter clamps his hand over her mouth, pulls a gun on her and carries her out -- along with the hat. Finally, the Mad Hatter slips into a big hotel kitchen and steals the chef's hat. This is seen by a pretty waitress, Lorna (same actress), who starts to scream. The Mad Hatter clamps his hand over her mouth, etcetera.

Gordon and O'Hara feel only the Mad Hatter could be behind these capers. And the one person who knows how to deal with him is Batman, who was a witness for the prosecution at the Mad Hatter's last trial.

Bruce and Dick are dabbling in some educational hobby at Bruce Manor when they get the word. Alfred and Aunt Harriet are established. Then Batman and Robin take off.

Gordon's office. Batman agrees these must be capers of the Mad Hatter's, as the silver shop manager, the sportsman and the hotel chef were all on the last jury which convicted the Hatter.

Ordinarily, stealing hats wouldn't be important enough to excite Batman's interest, but this has added elements. First, Batman was a witness at the Mad Hatter's last trial. The Mad Hatter will stop at nothing to get the hats he wants. And three girls have disappeared.

However, Batman has two pressing engagements. The first is to pose for a statue that a prominent local sculptor, Brumer, is making of Batman for a Gotham City park. The second is to visit a local atomic energy lab. Then Batman realizes these may work in his favor. If these appearances are publicized, they might invite the curiosity (or more) of the Mad Hatter. A TV news release is made up of the Mad Hatter's latest heists and the accompanying kidnappings, plus the fact that Batman has been alerted and has two previous appointments.

We now go to the Mad Hatter's hideaway and small hat factory. Establish the Mad Hatter again, and his gang. Plus a makeshift jury box, in which are twelve wax figures representing jurors. Nine of them already have hats on -- fireman's hats, top hats, a flowered woman's hat, etc. A witness chair stands beside the jury box in which sits a wax dummy of Batman, without his cowl (features only vaguely sketched in, as nobody knows what Batman really looks like). The Mad Hatter is putting the last three hats he's heisted on the last three dummies in the jury box. This leaves one to go: Batman's cowl. The thirteenth hat.

We also see the equipment in the Mad Hatter's hat factory. Flailing knives for cutting. Stretching devices. A rotating core for shrinking purposes, into which sulfuric acid is pumped.

The Mad Hatter gleefully listens to the TV coverage of

his hat heists and Batman's schedule. During this, we discover Lisa, Laura and Lorna tied up and gagged in an adjoining cell-like room. One of the Mad Hatter's stooges wants to know what the Mad Hatter plans to do with them. The Mad Hatter says not to bother him with details, he carried the girls off so they wouldn't give him away and now he has an appointment with the sculptor, Brumer. He takes off, leaving a rather perplexed stooge. And our leading lady tied up in her three-for-one part.

The Mad Hatter goes to Brumer's studio, overpowers the sculptor and takes his place with makeup and false beard. Batman arrives, with Robin. Batman starts to "sit" for the statue, but the Mad Hatter (as Brumer) tells Batman he's having trouble with the statue's head. If Batman will go into a dressing room and hand out his cowl, Brumer will try it on the statue and see what's wrong. Batman does so, and Robin brings out the cowl.

In the dressing room, Batman hears a low moan and discovers the real Brumer. In main part of the studio, the Mad Hatter is trying to overpower Robin and escape with the cowl. During this, Batman appears (with a beret of Brumer's pulled down over his face, eye-holes cut in it), and there is a fight sequence in and around the studio. Brandishing a gun, the Mad Hatter finally shoves some statuary over on our Dynamic Duo and heads for the door. As he reaches it, it opens and Brumer's pretty assistant, Lura (same actress) appears in it. She starts to scream, but the Mad Hatter clamps his hand over her mouth, holds his gun on her -- and carries her out, sans the cowl.

Behind him, Robin and Batman get to their feet, Batman clutching his cowl. This was a close one, but they have no

clues whereby they can follow the Mad Hatter. Batman says they better get on to the atomic laboratory, and await developments. Little does he know (though we know) that the Mad Hatter has sprayed the cowl, thereby making it radioactive to the cobalt fumes in the atomic lab. Soon, Batman will have to remove it. And, the Mad Hatter happily reports to his gang, Batman will be more than happy to give it away!

At the same time, Lura joins the other tied-up girls in the cell-like room.

Reprise first part, then:

Batman and Robin tour the atomic energy lab, where Batman's cowl begins to glow menacingly. Their scientist guide says it's becoming radio-active and Batman better remove it at once and have it decontaminated. Batman suspects the scientist is the Mad Hatter in disguise, until a geiger counter proves that the cowl is radio-active. The scientist calls for a worker, in a hooded protective suit, to bring Batman a hood to conceal his identity while Batman's cowl is being decontaminated.

In a rear room of the lab, we see that the worker called is a pretty female scientist, Lena (same actress). We also discover that the Mad Hatter has slipped into this area of the lab, hears these instructions, overpowers Lena, momentarily knocks her out and slips into another hooded protective suit. He takes a second hood, enters the main part of the lab, hands the hood to Batman and takes the cowl to supposedly be decontaminated. In the rear room of the lab, he picks up the still-unconscious Lena and carries her out, so she won't talk.

Batman and the others wait for a minute, and then discover the ruse. But Batman is one up on the Mad Hatter this time. The radioactive cowl isn't his real one. It's a substitute which he wore both at Brumer's, and here at the atomic lab, in case the Mad Hatter jumped him and got away with it. His real one's in the Batmobile. Batman now borrows a super-sensitive geiger counter from the lab, where it was just developed, and uses it to locate the Mad Hatter's getaway car and thus follow him to his hideout via Batmobile.

Batman and Robin enter the Mad Hatter's hideout via Batarang and Batrope, and confront the Mad Hatter just as he is putting the radioactive cowl on Batman's dummy in the witness chair. Thus, the Mad Hatter's caper would be complete if he wasn't now facing the Cowled Crusader and Boy Wonder.

The Mad Hatter is joined by members of his gang, and another fight sequence follows in his hideout during which props from various of the Mad Hatter's bizarre hat collection are used (a derringer from a Western badman's hat, a loosely-wrapped turban, etc.). It is obvious the Mad Hatter hopes to trap and then kill Batman and Robin ⁱⁿ his hat factory, but our Dynamic Duo eventually over-power the Mad Hatter and his henchmen and leave them among the flailing knives, stretching devices and rotating core for shrinking purposes -- into the last of ^{which} ~~which~~ the Mad Hatter falls, accidentally flipping on the stream of sulfuric acid just as Batman and Robin leave the hat factory and turn to releasing Lisa, Laura, Lorna, Lura and Lena.

Who aren't quintuplets, as we and the startled Batman might suspects, but merely sisters who "happen to look a lot alike". And who are all completely ga-ga over Batman.
